

**IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

On page 3, lines 5-11, please replace the paragraph with the following:

-- In one embodiment,  $R_2$  is an ester ( $R_{2a}C(O)O-$ ), a carbamate ( $R_{2a}R_{2b}NC(O)O-$ ), a carbonate ( $R_{2a}OC(O)O-$ ), or a **thiocarbonate thiocarbamate** ( $R_{2a}SC(O)O-$ ) wherein  $R_{2a}$  and  $R_{2b}$  are independently hydrogen, hydrocarbyl, substituted hydrocarbyl or heterocyclo. In a preferred embodiment,  $R_2$  is an ester ( $R_{2a}C(O)O-$ ), wherein  $R_{2a}$  is aryl or heteroaromatic. In another preferred embodiment,  $R_2$  is an ester ( $R_{2a}C(O)O-$ ), wherein  $R_{2a}$  is substituted or unsubstituted phenyl, furyl, thienyl, or pyridyl. In one particularly preferred embodiment,  $R_2$  is benzoyloxy. --.

On page 3, lines 12-33, please replace the paragraph with the following:

-- While  $R_9$  is keto in one embodiment of the present invention, in other embodiments  $R_9$  may have the alpha or beta stereochemical configuration, preferably the beta stereochemical configuration, and may be, for example,  $\alpha$ - or  $\beta$ -hydroxy or  $\alpha$ - or  $\beta$ -acyloxy. For example, when  $R_9$  is acyloxy, it may be an ester ( $R_{9a}C(O)O-$ ), a carbamate ( $R_{9a}R_{9b}NC(O)O-$ ), a carbonate ( $R_{9a}OC(O)O-$ ), or a **thiocarbonate thiocarbamate** ( $R_{9a}SC(O)O-$ ) wherein  $R_{9a}$  and  $R_{9b}$  are independently hydrogen, hydrocarbyl, substituted hydrocarbyl or heterocyclo. If  $R_9$  is an ester ( $R_{9a}C(O)O-$ ),  $R_{9a}$  is substituted or unsubstituted alkyl, substituted or unsubstituted alkenyl, substituted or unsubstituted aryl or substituted or unsubstituted heteroaromatic. Still more preferably,  $R_9$  is an ester ( $R_{9a}C(O)O-$ ), wherein  $R_{9a}$  is substituted or unsubstituted phenyl, substituted or unsubstituted furyl, substituted or unsubstituted thienyl, or substituted or unsubstituted pyridyl. In one embodiment  $R_9$  is ( $R_{9a}C(O)O-$ ) wherein  $R_{9a}$  is methyl, ethyl, propyl (straight, branched or cyclic), butyl (straight, branched or cyclic), pentyl, (straight, branched or cyclic), or hexyl (straight, branched or cyclic). In another embodiment  $R_9$  is ( $R_{9a}C(O)O-$ ) wherein  $R_{9a}$  is substituted methyl, substituted ethyl, substituted propyl (straight, branched or cyclic), substituted butyl (straight, branched or cyclic), substituted pentyl, (straight, branched or cyclic), or substituted hexyl (straight, branched or cyclic) wherein the substituent(s) is/are selected from the group consisting of heterocyclo, alkoxy, alkenoxy, alkynoxy, aryloxy, hydroxy, protected hydroxy, keto,

acyloxy, nitro, amino, amido, thiol, ketal, acetal, ester and ether moieties, but not phosphorous containing moieties. --.